

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

ONR GRANT #N00014-93-1-0730

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Mapping Jets and Eddies in an Eastern Boundary Current

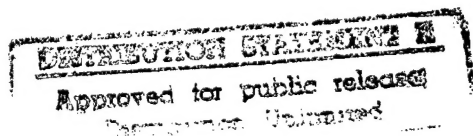
A high-resolution upper-ocean survey of a strong cyclonic meander and an adjacent cyclonic eddy in the California Current region near 38°N, 126°W was conducted in the summer of 1993. Temperature and salinity were measured from a SeaSoar vehicle, and velocity was measured by a shipboard acoustic Doppler current profiler (ADCP). The survey covered a 100 by 70 km region and was conducted during 29 June to 3 July 1993. SeaSoar derived density data show a strong density front at a depth of 70-100 m with strong cyclonic curvature. The corresponding geostrophic velocity fields, referenced to the ADCP data at 200 m, show a swift surface-intensified jet (0.8-1.0 m/s) that follows the density front through a cyclonic meander. Relative vorticities within the jet are large, ranging from $-0.4f$ to $+1.0f$, where f is the Coriolis parameter.

The SeaSoar density and ADCP velocity data are used to diagnose vertical velocity via the Q-vector form of the quasigeostrophic omega equation. The diagnosed vertical velocity field shows velocities of 30-40 m/day. The lateral distribution of relative vorticity and vertical velocity is characterized by patches with length scales of 20-30 km. Geostrophic streamline analysis of vertical velocity indicates that water parcels make net vertical excursions of 20-30 m over 2-3 days, resulting in net vertical velocities of 10-15 m/day. Water parcels moving along geostrophic streamlines experience maximum vertical velocities in regions of maximum alongstream change in relative vorticity, an indication of potential vorticity conservation.

This was the first diagnosis of vertical velocity from direct, high-resolution, synoptic density and velocity data from the California Current region. Comparisons of these direct estimates with vertical velocities inferred from tracer transport and from numerical models are good. Vertical motions associated with mesoscale circulation features have important consequences, in terms of net vertical transport, for the biology and chemistry of eastern boundary current regions.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- Huyer, A., J. A. Barth, P. M. Kosro, R. K. Shearman and R. L. Smith, 1997. Upper-ocean water mass characteristics of the California Current, summer 1993. *Deep-Sea Res.*, in press.
- Shearman, R. K., J. A. Barth and P. M. Kosro, 1997. Diagnosis of the three-dimensional circulation associated with mesoscale motion in the California Current. *J. Phys. Oceanogr.*, submitted.



19970903 048

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE August 1997	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Final Report 1 Jun 93 - 31 Oct 96		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Mapping Jets and Eddies in an Eastern Boundary Current		5. FUNDING NUMBERS N00014-93-1-0730		
6. AUTHOR(S) John A. Barth		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) College of Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences Oregon State University 104 Ocean Admin Bldg Corvallis, OR 97331-5503				
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Office of Naval Research Physical Oceanography Program, 322PO 800 N. Quincy Street Arlington, VA 22217-5660		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited		12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE		
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) A high-resolution upper-ocean survey of a cyclonic meander and an adjacent eddy in the California Current region near 38N, 126W was conducted in summer 1993. Temperature and salinity were measured from a SeaSoar vehicle, and velocity was measured by a shipboard acoustic Doppler current profiler (ADCP). SeaSoar data show a density front at a depth of 70-100 m with strong cyclonic curvature. The geostrophic velocity fields, referenced to the ADCP data at 200 m, show a surface-intensified jet (0.8-1.0 m/s) that follows the density front through a cyclonic meander. Relative vorticities within the jet are large, ranging from $-0.4f$ to $+1.0f$, where f is the Coriolis parameter. The SeaSoar density and ADCP velocity data are used to diagnose vertical velocity via the Q-vector form of the quasigeostrophic omega equation. The diagnosed vertical velocity field shows velocities of 30-40 m/day and is characterized by horizontal scales of 20-30 km. Geostrophic streamline analysis indicates that water parcels make vertical excursions of 20-30 m in 2-3 days, resulting in net vertical velocities of 10-15 m/day. Water parcels moving along geostrophic streamlines experience maximum vertical velocities in regions of maximum alongstream change in relative vorticity, an indication of potential vorticity conservation.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 1	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT None	